

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-25 were originally filed in this patent application. In the pending office action, claims 9-25 were objected to for informalities. Claims 1-8 were allowed. In this amendment, claims 15-17, 22 and 23 have been cancelled, and claims 12, 14, 20, 21 and 25 have been amended. Claims 1-14, 18-21, 24 and 25 are currently pending.

REMARKS

Objection to the Specification

The examiner objected to the specification due to the blanks in the Related Application paragraph on page 1. The paragraph has been replaced herein with the actual serial number and filing date of the related application, thereby overcoming the examiner's objection to the specification.

Objection to claims 9-25

The examiner objected to claims 9-25 for informalities. Referring to claim 9, the examiner states the antecedent basis for "delay characteristics" is not clear, and thus what is meant by the adjusting step is not clear. Applicants assert that the language of claim 9 as originally filed is clear. Lines 8 and 9 of claim 9 recite: "adjusting the slack according to delay characteristics through the at least one common block." The delay characteristics are "through the at least one common block" as clearly recited in the claim, and because this is the first time delay characteristics are introduced in claim 9, this term does not lack antecedent basis in the claim. For this reason, the examiner's objection to the term "delay characteristics as lacking antecedent basis is without merit. Furthermore, the adjusting step adjusts the slack, which has antecedent basis in line 5 as "slack between the clock test signal and the data launch signal." For this reason, the examiner's objection to the adjusting step is without merit, because adjusting the slack is clearly recited in lines 8 and 9 of claim 9 and the term "slack" has antecedent basis at line 5 of claim 9. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the examiner's objection to claim 9.

Referring to claim 11, the examiner states:

the antecedent basis for “delay characteristics” [line 10 and 20] is not clear, thus what it particularly meant by the “automatically adjusting” and “adjusting” steps [lines 10-11 and 20-21] is not clear.

Lines 10-11 recite: “automatically adjusting the first slack number according to delay characteristics through the first set of common blocks.” The delay characteristics at lines 10-11 are through the first set of common blocks, as clearly recited in claim 11. The automatically adjusting in lines 10-11 relates to the first slack number, which is introduced in detail in lines 6-7. The adjusting in lines 20-21 relates to the second slack number, which is introduced in detail in lines 15-16. Applicants respectfully assert the limitations in claim 11 are clear and defined within claim 11, and thus request reconsideration of the examiner’s objection to claim 11.

Referring to claim 12, the examiner objected to “the user-identified at least one common block” as lacking antecedent basis. Claim 12 has been amended herein to recite “the user-identified second set of common blocks”, which has antecedent basis in claim 11 line 17. Applicant hereby asserts that the amendment to claim 12 overcomes the examiner’s objection to claim 12.

Referring to claim 14, the examiner states:

there is no antecedent basis for “slack computations” [line 6], thus what is particularly meant by “improving at least one of a plurality of” [lines 5-6] is not clear.

Claim 14 recites at lines 5-6: “improving at least one of a plurality of slack computations due to the at least one common logic block”. The term “a plurality of slack computations” is the first time this term is introduced, so there is no antecedent basis issue. The improving step recited above is clear, and relates to improving at least one of the plurality of slack computations due to the at least one common logic block, as

expressly recited in claim 14. Applicants respectfully assert that the limitations in claim 14 are clear and defined within claim 14, and thus request reconsideration of the examiner's objection to claim 14.

Claim 17 has been cancelled herein, thereby rendering the examiner's objection to claim 17 moot.

Regarding claim 20, the examiner objected to "the static timing tool" as lacking antecedent basis. Claim 20 has been amended herein to recite "a static timing tool", thereby providing proper antecedent basis for this limitation.

Regarding claim 21, the examiner objected to "slack computations" as lacking antecedent basis. Claim 21 has been amended herein to recite "a plurality of slack computations", thereby providing proper antecedent basis for this term in claim 21.

Regarding claim 25, the examiner objected to "the slack" at line 4 as lacking antecedent basis. Claim 25 has been amended herein to recite "the at least one slack computation", which has antecedent basis at lines 6 and 7 of claim 21.

Claims 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22-24 were objected to for incorporating the rejections above based upon their dependency. Because the objections were addressed for all of the claims above, the objections to claims 10, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 22-24 have likewise been overcome.

Amendments to claims 14-16 and 21-23

To address a potential issued under 35 U.S.C. §101, claims 15, 16, 22 and 23 have been cancelled, and claims 14 and 21 have been amended.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully assert that all of applicants' claims are allowable. Such allowance at an early date is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if this would in any way advance the prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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